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ABSTRACT

Following a brief review of recent studies on liberal education, the following key elements of a strong liberal arts component in a teacher education program are cited: (1) It focuses more on how one learns in the liberal arts than on specific knowledge to be learned, though it does teach knowledge; (2) The specific courses chosen to achieve the goals of the component vary from one student to another depending on each teacher candidate's prior educational background, abilities, interests, and area or areas of certification; (3) To encourage wise course selection, students are provided with a list of the knowledge and skills that they are expected to gain through the liberal studies component; (4) Faculty members are provided with a list of the knowledge and skills that teacher candidates are expected to gain through the liberal studies component to help in planning; (5) Before certification students demonstrate through a formal assessment that they have gained an acceptable proportion of the knowledge and skills listed; and (6) To ensure breadth of knowledge and skills, a sizable portion of each teacher candidate's baccalaureate program is composed of courses in the liberal arts. Four steps for introducing a strengthened liberal arts program into an institution are suggested. (JD)

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# LIBERAL STUDIES IN TEACHER EDUCATION

by

David M. Memory

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Coalition of Teacher Education Programs
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## Liberal Studies in Teacher Education

In their review of research on teacher education, Evertson, Hawley, and Zlotnik (1985, p. 6) say: "We could not find any evidence in research on teacher education specifically or undergraduate education more generally that would provide support for the idea that a broad liberal arts education promotes the development of the values, analytical skills, love of learning, or other personal and intellectual characteristics one might reasonably attribute to teachers who care about their students and understand what it takes to facilitate learning." Despite this statement, these writers propose as the first component of a model for teacher education "a strong liberal arts undergraduate education" (Evertson, Hawley, & Zlotnik, 1985, P. 8).

Many teacher educators and other college and university faculty probably would approve of Evertson, Hawley, and Zlotnik's acceptance on faith of the value of the liberal studies component of teacher education programs. Moreover, at times and places in which few options compete for the hours in such programs, their recommendation seems justified. These are times, though, when accrediting agencies in the subject areas are requiring more hours in the baccalaureate programs in those areas. In departments, schools, and colleges of education, a similar desire for expanded programs exists, except that the wish is to increase the hours devoted to pedagogy, not to the content of instruction. In this environment the possibility of strengthening the liberal studies component of teacher education may seem doubtful.

Teacher educators who share Evertson, Hawley, and Zlotnik's faith in liberal arts education and wish to see that component of teacher education strengthened must answer at least three questions:

1. How can a strong liberal studies component contribute to the preparation of teachers?

2. What should the liberal studies component of teacher education include?

3. How can a strengthened liberal studies component be introduced into a teacher education program?

This paper will attempt to answer these questions in the context of the educational system in Indiana.

### The Contributions of a Strong Liberal Studies Component

Despite Evertson, Hawley, and Zlotnik's failure to find research support for a broad liberal arts education for teacher candidates, many reasons exist for strengthening that component of teacher education programs in Indiana.

In the last fifteen years, as better paying and more prestigious occupations have become more available to women and minorities and as teaching has become less appealing in terms of income, working conditions, and prestige, the students attracted to teaching have become less academically oriented and less academically able than the teacher candidates in the past

(Weaver, 1979; Vance & Schlechty, 1982). For several reasons liberal arts education is a particularly important part of the preparation of these less academically able teacher candidates. Muscatine (1982) defines the importance of the liberal arts curriculum in general terms:

> [Prospective teachers] are, among all the students on campus, the ones who are not only going to take the curriculum but also to duplicate or perpetuate it. It is not only part of the college experience; it becomes a part of their life pattern. For other students, the curriculum on the college campus might be conceived of as a means to an end. For prospective teachers it is a means but it is also an end and a model. It, or some version of it, is what they are going to live with, live in, and teach toward. (p. 3)

One might quibble with this statement by arguing, for example, that teachers in the vocational areas do not teach toward the liberal arts curriculum; but Muscatine continues building his case for a strong liberal studies component by saying:

> A thin, intellectually anemic, authoritarian college curriculum will attract those who will tolerate it. It will attract an anemic, passive prospective teacher with predictable results for all education for many years to come. A richer, more intellectually satisfying curriculum, a more powerful curriculum, will attract more complex, more adventurous, more powerful individuals to teaching. (p. 14)

Until a strengthened liberal studies component of teacher education can begin to help attract more academically able teacher candidates, that component at least can prepare the available candidates well for imparting in students the content of the liberal arts curriculum. That process of sharing with students the general knowledge of the liberal arts is important for at least three reasons. One is that the verbal ability of teachers shows a modest relationship to the verbal test scores of their students (Evertson, Hawley, & Zlotnik, 1985). A reasonable explanation of this finding is that the more prospective teachers learn in college, the more they will know as teachers. The more they know as teachers, the richer their verbal presentations can be. And the richer their verbal presentations are, the more their students can learn.

A second reason for providing a broad liberal arts education for teacher candidates involves the ability to show the importance of one's own teaching field. Teachers who know little about fields other than their own cannot reveal the interrelationships among their own and other disciplines as easily as can teachers with broad academic backgrounds. Consequently, more narrowly educated teachers are limited in the resources they can use to convince all students of the importance of their own fields. For example, a mathematics teacher who knows only that field may have difficulty demonstrating the relevance of mathematics to poorly motivated students.

A third reason for the importance of being able to use liberal arts content in teaching is primarily relevant to elementary teachers and other

teachers in self-contained classrooms. Recently educators have been reminded that, to improve reading ability, elementary teachers need to teach science and social studies, not just language arts skills. The importance of these and other content areas has been reaffirmed by reports from the Center for the Study of Reading, which demonstrate that readers comprehend by using prior knowledge, not simply by gaining new knowledge (e.g., Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, & Goetz, 1977). Therefore, teachers in self-contained classrooms must be able to teach the content that will best help students to comprehend their reading assignments as they move through the grades--that is, the content of the liberal arts.

Another justification for a strengthened liberal studies component in the preparation of less academically able teacher candidates is the need for teachers to be able to defend general education in high school. In Indiana high schools with their increased requirements in mathematics, science, and English, this need is particularly great. More advanced mathematics, science, and English courses, which pupils will have to add to their programs, are probably more demanding than the electives from which earlier high school pupils could choose. As a result, teachers will need to be able to defend the value of those more demanding courses. Teacher candidates who are less academically oriented than their counterparts in the past, and who themselves may have graduated when high school general education requirements were weaker, will need to be exposed to a strong liberal arts education if they are to succeed in defending general education in high schools.

Not only should teachers be able to defend a liberal arts curriculum and impart major elements of it, but also they need to be capable of modes of thought that may best be learned through such a curriculum. In arguing for strong foundations courses in the professional component of teacher education, Webb and Sherman (1983) say:

> The current rush to install extended teacher preparation programs on an assumed "knowledge base" has truncated the discussion of aims and thus risks further vocationalizing teacher education. Teachers trained in programs that emphasize practice and abandon theory will be less able to think broadly and flexibly about their teaching methods....Teacher preparation programs should take more notice of the fact that to act with an aim is to act with a theory in mind. The unity of theory and practice in teacher preparation programs can be achieved only by attention to aims. (p. 26)

Though this statement was made in defense of elements of the professional component of teacher education, it points to what may be an increasingly important function of the liberal studies component. If more time in the professional component is devoted to training teacher candidates in research-based teaching skills, less time will be available to focus on theory. Teacher educators will then have to depend more on their colleagues in the liberal arts to teach the sociological, psychological, and philosophical theories that teachers need for thinking "broadly and flexibly about their teaching methods."

One might accept these justifications for a strong liberal studies component in teacher education but still be reluctant to endorse the strengthening of that component as a priority in the reform of teacher education. Evertson, Hawley, and Zlotnik's (1985) failure to find research support for liberal arts education in teacher preparation makes such reluctance seem reasonable. Indeed, one major study of the benefits of a liberal arts education suggests that those benefits are more attributable to the overall atmosphere of the college in which the education is obtained and to the extracurricular activities of students than to the formal coursework taken (Winter, McClelland, & Stewart, 1981).

Nevertheless, evidence does exist that a strong liberal arts curriculum can have some of the effects discussed above. For example, in the report of the College Outcome Measures Project, Forrest (1982) says: "For the eight institutions that feature both a sizable general education component and even distribution across disciplines, the average persistence-to-graduation rate is 55%, while the rate for the nine institutions with neither attribute is 48%. The group of eight institutions with the more demanding general education requirements shows an average score gain of 8.9 [on a test measuring skills and knowledge assumed to be taught in college], while the group of nine that was less demanding shows an average score gain of 3.8" (p. 33). A related finding was a result of an investigation conducted as part of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (Astin, 1977). That study found that attending a college with high academic standards was associated with increases that were greater than expected in intellectual self-esteem, which was a composite measure including intellectual self-confidence, perceived academic ability, and perceived mathematical ability. Teacher educators cannot be guaranteed that a strengthened liberal studies component of teacher preparation would have all the desired outcomes, but at least some reason exists for faith that more knowledgeable and more intellectually capable teachers would be a result.

Beyond these contributions of a strengthened liberal studies component of teacher education are two benefits that may not seem noteworthy but do deserve consideration.

One benefit involves the hours required on majors in the teaching fields. The evidence of the last twenty years is that majors have a tendency to consume hours not otherwise specified in baccalaureate programs (Gaff, 1983). But studies usually find that teachers feel more confident about their knowledge in their major fields than about other knowledge and skills needed in teaching (e.g., Henry, 1985). One way to prevent further unjustified expansion of the requirements for teaching majors would be to convert some elective hours to hours in the liberal studies component of the teacher education program.

In Indiana another contribution of a strengthened liberal studies component of teacher preparation would likely be better performance by teacher education graduates on the Test of General Knowledge of the National Teacher Examinations. If this test did not assess important knowledge and skills, one might question improved test performance as being a justification for teacher education reform. In fact, though, performance on the Test of General Knowledge does appear to require important teaching-related knowledge and skills. Specifically, it seems to assess understanding of major

concepts and principles in the liberal arts and the ability to apply that knowledge (A guide, 1984). A strengthened liberal studies component of teacher preparation in Indiana should both help develop the important knowledge and skills evaluated by that portion of the National Teacher Examinations and help provide evidence of the quality of teacher education in this state.

## The Elements of a Strong Liberal Studies Component

When reformers of teacher education are satisfied that the liberal studies component deserves strengthening, the next issue to consider is what that component should include. In the last two years, three study groups have issued reports recommending what they would consider improvements in the general education portion of baccalaureate programs. One way to examine options for strengthening the liberal studies component of teacher education is to review some of the key recommendations in those reports.

At one extreme, in terms of the specificity of the proposed curriculum, is To Reclaim a Legacy, written by Secretary of Education William Bennett (1984) for the Study Group on the State of Learning in the Humanities in Higher Education. That report contains the following statement:

> Based on our discussions, we recommend the following knowledge in the humanities as essential to a college education:
>
> Because our society is the product and we the inheritors of Western civilization, American students need an understanding of its origins and development, from its roots in antiquity to the present. This understanding should include a grasp of the major trends in society, religion, art, literature, and politics, as well as a knowledge of basic chronology.
>
> A careful reading of several masterworks of English, American and European literature.
>
> An understanding of the most significant ideas and debates in the history of philosophy.
>
> Demonstrable proficiency in a foreign language (either modern or classical) and the ability to view that language as an avenue into another culture.
>
> In addition to these areas of fundamental knowledge, study group members recommended that undergraduates have some familiarity with the history, literature, religion, and philosophy of at least one non-Western culture or civilization. We think it better to have a deeper understanding of a single non-Western culture than a superficial taste of many. Finally, the study group thought that all students should study the history of science and technology. (pp. 12-13)

In addition to specifying this knowledge to be taught to all students, the Bennett report says that "the curriculum should be based on original literary, historical, and philosophical texts rather than on secondary works

or textbooks" (p. 11). Bennett even lists authors and some specific works that he believes should be considered for inclusion in an institution's curriculum.

A prescribed curriculum approach to general education, such as the one outlined in To Reclaim a Legacy, might work in certain small institutions in which most of the students and faculty share common values. However, as the coordinators of one of the best organized national general education reform projects learned, what works well in one college or university may fail miserably in another because of the varied characteristics and traditions of institutions (Project on General Education Models, 1980). As one might expect, the willingness reflected in the Bennett report to require that all college students be taught certain specified knowledge is rejected by commentators on liberal education in teacher preparation. For example, in one article on that topic Rich (1980, p. 28) says, "In other words, there may no longer be a fixed content for the liberal arts on which widespread consensus can be achieved...." In another article Carbone (1980, p. 16) elaborates: "Because of factors familiar to the most casual observer--the proliferation of knowledge, the lack of any real agreement concerning the nature, meaning, and justification of value judgments, the absence of belief in eternal truths and perennial values (the very terms seem quaint to us)--we simply have no basis for agreement as to what subject matter is essential to a liberal-arts program." Stated in a different way, even if teacher educators could agree on general goals for the liberal studies component of teacher preparation, no single set of courses will best accomplish those goals for teacher candidates at all grade levels, in all teaching fields, and from all educational backgrounds.

Many of the problems in the Bennett approach are avoided in the report of the Project on Redefining the Meaning and Purpose of Baccalaureate Degrees, Integrity in the College Curriculum (1985). The committee that produced that report says:

> We do not believe that the road to a coherent undergraduate education can be constructed from a set of required subjects or academic disciplines. We do believe that there are methods and processes, modes of access to understanding and judgment, that should inform all study. While learning cannot of course take place devoid of subject matter, how that subject matter is experienced is what concerns us here. We are in search of an education that will enable the American people to live responsibly and joyfully, fulfilling their promise as individual humans and their obligations as democratic citizens. We believe that the following nine experiences are essential to that kind of education: some of them might be thought of as skills, others as ways of growing and understanding; we think that all of them are basic to a coherent undergraduate education. (p. 15)

Included in that list are (1) inquiry, abstract logical thinking, and critical analysis; (2) literacy, including writing, reading, speaking, and listening; (3) understanding numerical data; (4) historical consciousness; (5) science; (6) values; (7) art; (8) international and multicultural experiences; and (9) study in depth. The report continues:

> In proposing this minimum required curriculum, consisting of nine criteria or objectives that should define the learning of every college undergraduate, we clearly have placed our emphasis on how to learn. The distinction between ways of knowing and knowledge is a false one -- there can be no knowing without knowledge because knowing leads there. On the other hand, knowledge can be served up and passed around without regard for the ways of knowing. The problem with the American college curriculum is not that it has failed to offer up knowledge. The problem is that it offers too much knowledge with too little attention to how that knowledge has been created and what methods and styles of inquiry have led to its creation. The skills and experience of our minimum required curriculum deny the distinction. There are ways of knowing that are also invitations to knowledge and to shared culture. We propose that faculties focus on the "how" and allow their sense of what is essential and appropriate to a common culture to shape the selection of the "what." (Integrity, 1985, p. 24)

In contrast with Bennett's (1984) focus on prescribed knowledge to be taught, this emphasis on ways of gaining knowledge has been supported by writers on liberal studies in teacher education (Carbone, 1980; Raths, 1980). As one theorist of general education has said, "students must learn the various 'ways of knowing.' Otherwise they will be able neither to continue to learn on their own nor to critically evaluate the claims of others" (Berkowitz, 1982, p. 218). This conception of liberal education seems particularly appropriate to teacher preparation because of the frequent changes in the knowledge that teachers are expected to impart. For example, major portions of the content that teacher candidates learn today in science, health, and technology will certainly not be what they will be expected to teach or at least need to know in the future. As the accepted knowledge in the various teaching fields changes, teachers must be prepared to learn new content. Therefore, the liberal studies component of teacher education should focus more on teaching students how to learn in the various disciplines than on teaching them specific content.

However, there is at least one major problem with the recommendations in Integrity in the College Curriculum (1985), and that is how to ensure that students are taught the essential "ways of knowing" when the vehicles for transmitting those skills are college courses designed and taught by individual faculty members in an environment of academic freedom. The third of the recent reports on liberal education, Involvement in Learning (1984), in part attempts to deal with that problem. One of the recommendations in that report is: "Faculties and chief academic officers in each institution should agree upon and disseminate a statement of the knowledge, capacities, and skills that students must develop prior to graduation" (Involvement, 1984, p. 39). In explaining the rationale for this recommendation, the writers of the report say, "We believe that the clearer and the more public our statements about what we expect, the more likely students are to map an appropriate course of study, not only for their college years but for their high school years as well" (Involvement, 1984, p. 39). Continuing the justification for this recommendation, the report adds, "By clarifying the capacities students are supposed to develop during the four years of college, faculty remind themselves of what they are supposed to be

doing in their own classes" (Involvement, 1984, p. 40). Apparently as an incentive for students and faculty to do as suggested, the report recommends that "community colleges, colleges, and universities should supplement the credit system with proficiency assessments both in liberal education and in the student's major as a condition of awarding degrees" (Involvement, 1984, p. 46). In brief, this report says that each institution should specify the knowledge and skills that graduates are expected to learn, but that faculty should be allowed to decide how that content will be taught and students should be permitted to decide which courses they will take to learn the specified knowledge and skills. Accountability is to be achieved partly through a program of required tests. In a sense, the design offered in this report already matches one policy in the State of Indiana: to be certified, each teacher education graduate is required to pass a test of liberal education and a test in his or her major field.

In addition, the report acknowledges a reality in Indiana colleges and universities, which is that "a liberal education curriculum will not and cannot be the same for students of all levels of ability, ages, and interests" (Involvement, 1984, p. 44). In departments, schools, and colleges of education, this diversity is in no way reduced. In a teacher education program there may be students who represent almost every academic discipline in an institution. Moreover, with students over a wide age range and from a variety of academic backgrounds, teacher education institutions cannot assume that any certain set of liberal arts courses is the best one for teaching even a specific body of knowledge and skills to all teacher candidates. Choice must be part of the liberal studies component of teacher education.

Another recommendation of the Study Group on the Conditions of Excellence in American Higher Education, which produced Involvement in Learning, is that "all bachelor's degree recipients should have at least two full years of liberal education" (Involvement, 1984, p. 41). In support of this recommendation, the Study Group says, "We are convinced that what should distinguish the baccalaureate degree from more specialized credentials is the broad learning that lies behind it. An increase in liberal education requirements is one way to guarantee that comprehensiveness" (Involvement, 1984, p. 44).

One can question whether teacher candidates in such fields as business education and industrial arts could complete a teacher education program in four years while taking half of their hours in the liberal arts. Nevertheless, in junior high/middle school and secondary programs that call for only the state-required 40 hours of general education, an expansion of the liberal studies component of teacher preparation may be justified. In the institutions in the Association of Colleges and Schools of Education in State Universities and Land Grant Colleges and Affiliated Private Universities, students being certified at the secondary level are required to take a mean of 47 semester hours of general education (Ishler, 1984). Indeed, 54% of the institutions call for 50 or more hours of general education by their teacher candidates at the secondary level. If the following statement of the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education (1985) is to become a reality, more than the state-required 40 hours of general education for junior high/middle school and secondary teachers may be necessary:

> We maintain that teachers should have a liberal education equivalent to that of the best-educated members of their community, not simply a few courses in each of several general academic fields; that teachers should know and understand the intellectual and practical content from which school curricula are drawn, not simply become familiar with their portion of a school's curriculum.... (p. 14)

Based on the relevant implications of the three recent reports on liberal education, one can list the following key elements of a strong liberal studies component of teacher education:

1. It focuses more on the way we learn in the liberal arts than on specific knowledge to be learned, though it does teach knowledge.

2. The specific courses chosen to achieve the goals of the component vary from one student to another depending on each teacher candidate's prior educational background, abilities, interests, and area or areas of certification.

3. To help students make wise choices of courses, they are provided with a list of the knowledge and skills that they are expected to gain through the liberal studies component.

4. To help faculty members plan their courses well, they are provided with a list of the knowledge and skills that teacher candidates are expected to gain through the liberal studies component.

5. Before being certified to teach, the students demonstrate through a formal assessment that they have gained an acceptable proportion of the knowledge and skills listed.

6. To ensure breadth of knowledge and skills, a sizable portion of each teacher candidate's baccalaureate program is composed of courses in the liberal arts.

## Introducing a Strengthened Liberal Studies Component

If the elements listed above are accepted as features of a strong liberal studies component of teacher preparation, several tasks must be carried out to introduce those features into a teacher education program. What the tasks are and how difficult they would be to accomplish would vary from one institution to another. The discussion below describes a series of steps that might be taken to introduce a strengthened liberal studies component in an institution that has distribution requirements in the liberal arts as the heart of its general education program.

Step One

Compile a list of knowledge, skills, and other characteristics that should be possessed by beginning teachers.

This step in strengthening the liberal studies component of teacher education can be justified in several ways. For one, an organized effort to prepare a list of knowledge, skills, and other characteristics for teacher candidates would help ensure that important characteristics are not overlooked in teacher preparation and that unimportant ones or counterproductive ones are not given undeserved attention. To achieve agreement in the preparation process, the compilers of such a list probably would have to focus on rather broad characteristics; but even a list of that nature could be helpful. In addition to its use in strengthening the liberal studies component, this list of important knowledge, skills, and other characteristics of beginning teachers could contribute to the quality of the professional education component. Having the list could make faculty members in departments, schools, and colleges of education aware of supplementary objectives that they might incorporate into their courses.

In compiling the list, several considerations should be kept in mind. As implied earlier, attention should be given to the ways of gaining knowledge in the liberal arts. Certain bodies of existing knowledge might be viewed as important enough to include on the list, but how we learn through the liberal arts should be given preference. In light of teacher certification rules in Indiana, another consideration might be what is assessed on the Test of General Knowledge and Test of Communication Skills of the National Teacher Examinations. The assessment objectives published by the Educational Testing Service are specific enough to be of assistance in preparing the list (A Guide, 1984). Additional guidance might come from the outline of knowledge and skills that the College Board believes are necessary for success in college (Academic Preparation, 1983). Certainly teachers who have graduated from college and who are involved in the preparation of students for college can be expected to possess the knowledge and skills deemed essential for academic success in college. Another source of information for compiling the list should be the research on characteristics of effective teachers. At least some of the findings of that research have implications for what should be taught in the liberal studies component of teacher education and how it should be taught. Once the list of important knowledge, skills, and other characteristics of beginning teachers has been compiled, it should be put into the form of a checklist organized by the subject area in which each element on the list is most likely to be taught.

Step Two

Prepare a list of the liberal arts courses approved for general education credit and the teaching-related knowledge, skills, and other characteristics that each course teaches; and distribute the information to teacher candidates, advisors, and instructors.

This step in strengthening the liberal studies component of teacher preparation would accomplish several things. The obvious benefit is that having this information available would assist advisors in guiding prospective

teachers into the general education courses that would be most helpful in preparing the students for teaching. Moreover, giving teacher candidates this list of liberal arts courses and the teaching-related knowledge, skills, and other characteristics taught would convey support for the college or university's general education program which is sometimes in question, even in students' eyes. Such a demonstration of support might make students more serious about their general education coursework. Another advantage of having this information available is that it probably would remind liberal arts instructors of some of the knowledge, skills, and other characteristics that their general education courses are assumed to teach.

This step in the strengthening of the liberal studies component of teacher preparation necessarily would involve cooperation among many academic units of a college or university. To begin, copies of the checklist described above would need to be given to the chairperson of each department in the arts and sciences, who would describe each general education course that the department offers according to the listed knowledge, skills, and other characteristics that it teaches. The information gathered from the various arts and science departments would then be compiled into a master list of general education courses. The list would provide the name, department, and number of each course and the teaching-related knowledge, skills, and other characteristics that each course teaches.

Another helpful document that could be prepared from the information gathered would be a special version of the checklist of knowledge, skills, and other characteristics needed by beginning teachers. For each item on the checklist, this version would indicate the liberal arts course or courses that teach that knowledge, skill, or other characteristic. When these documents have been prepared, they would be distributed to teacher candidates and to advisors. Instructors in the arts and sciences would receive the master list. These documents could then be used by teacher candidates and advisors for deciding which liberal arts courses to take for general education credit and by liberal arts instructors for planning their courses.

Step Three

Require that graduating teacher candidates pass tests demonstrating acquisition of an acceptable proportion of the knowledge, skills, and other characteristics needed by beginning teachers.

In a sense this step in strengthening the liberal studies component of teacher education has already been taken in Indiana. Though the wisdom of requiring teacher candidates to pass the National Teacher Examinations may be questioned by some teacher educators, that policy probably will have several desirable consequences. It may lead departments in the liberal arts to improve the quality of instruction in general education courses, and it may lead teacher candidates to improve the quality of the work that they do in those courses. Both of those potential outcomes can be welcomed.

Step Four

In addition to the state-specified nine hours in written and oral communication, require teacher candidates to take the equivalent of at least 36 semester hours of courses in the liberal arts distributed evenly among three broad areas -- the humanities, the social and behavioral sciences, and the natural sciences and mathematics.

In many institutions in Indiana this step may already have been taken. Where it has not, it can be justified in several ways discussed earlier. An increase in the number of hours in the liberal studies component can help ensure that graduates of teacher education programs can use the content of the liberal arts in their teaching. Facility in sharing that knowledge can enable teachers both to improve the reading and other language abilities of their students and to demonstrate the importance of their own teaching fields. An expanded liberal studies component also can help prepare teacher education graduates for defending general education in high school. Finally, in teacher preparation programs that use the professional education component primarily to train students in research-based teaching skills, an enlarged liberal studies component can be counted on more heavily to present the sociological, psychological, and philosophical theories that teachers need for thinking "broadly and flexibly about their teaching methods" (Webb & Sherman, 1983, p. 26).

The steps suggested above are not meant to be viewed as an all-or-nothing proposal for strengthening the liberal studies component of teacher education. They do constitute an organized plan, but limited cooperation from arts and science departments might preclude complete implementation of the proposal. However, even if only partial implementation is possible, the benefits could be substantial. Simply using faculty time to prepare even an incomplete list of knowledge, skills, and other characteristics needed by beginning teachers could sensitize education faculty to some of the easily overlooked teacher qualities that should be objectives of teacher education. If either a comprehensive or a partial list is compiled and distributed to arts and science faculty, it could lead to liberal arts instruction that contributes more to teacher preparation. If even some of the arts and science departments provide information about the teaching-related knowledge, skills, and other characteristics taught by general education courses, that information could contribute to improved advisement of teacher candidates.

Though Step One and Step Two are the heart of this proposal, implementation of only Step Three and Step Four should strengthen the liberal studies component of a teacher education program. Students who take a wide range of liberal arts courses knowing that their knowledge and skills in those areas will be assessed are likely to approach the courses seriously and to profit from them. Moreover, as teacher candidates become increasingly aware of the need to perform well on the National Teacher Examinations, they might begin to insist on more guidance in preparing for the tests. One result of that pressure could be eventual implementation of the first two steps of the proposal.

In sum, the liberal studies component of teacher preparation can be strengthened through a variety of measures. Taking all of the steps recommended would produce the maximum benefits, but even taking only some could improve the quality of the graduates of teacher education programs in Indiana.

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